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STATE FOR AF/EPS AND AF/E - MBEYZEROV
TREASURY FOR FBOYE
PARIS FOR WBAIN AND RKANEDA

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SUBJECT: MADAGASCAR: INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY DELIVERS BLUNT
MESSAGE TO TGV

Classified By: AMBASSADOR NIELS MARQUARDT FOR REASONS 1.4B AND D.

1. (C) Summary. Urgently convoked by HAT President Rajoelina on September 10, key ambassadors responded to his soft-soap appeal for understanding and support with a firm, unified reply denouncing his unilateral formation of a non-consensual government and stating that further sanctions and difficulties await Madagascar if there is no change in direction. "TGV" responded with a polite repetition of his opening remarks, showing no sign of comprehending our message. However, 90 minutes later, his foreign minister told me "TGV understood completely", has now agreed to resume negotiations with the other movements, and is going to find a consensus prime minister to unblock the current impasse. Talk is cheap in Madagascar, and TGV is famously erratic in taking decisions, so we'll believe it when we see it -- but the foreign minister's remarks leave some room for optimism that the Malagasy may yet find a way back to the Maputo Process without a further unraveling of the situation on the ground. End Summary.

2. (C) I and my French, German, and EU colleagues were convoked urgently to see Andry "TGV" Rajoelina Thursday afternoon. Before going to the palace, I met briefly with my French colleague, Jean-Marc Chataigner, to compare notes and coordinate our approach. I expressed concern (septel) that TGV may have reached the end of the line with his failure to name a consensus prime minister or form a truly inclusive government. I referred to reports that the military might be ready to abandon TGV, either forcing him to resign or otherwise removing him. Chataigner agreed that retaining Monja as prime minister had been a huge mistake and told me that he had gone to see Monja Wednesday to suggest that he resign in the best interests of Madagascar. However, he did not think TGV was finished or that the military was ready to cut him loose. I agreed that the best outcome would be the selection of a consensus prime minister, if that were still possible.

3. (C) Sitting alone, TGV opened the meeting with a friendly but naive appeal for international support for elections that he said must be organized as soon as possible. He said "we did our best" in forming a consensus government, but blamed the three opposition movements for making things difficult for him, especially last Friday when Zafy and co. had proposed that the military "assume its responsibilities" by taking the top three posts in the transition (president, vice-president, and prime minister). He touted the new government as inclusive and consistent with the Maputo accords and sang the praises of several of his nominations,

including former Senate President Guy Rajemison (now Vice-President), former Defense Minister Cecile Manorohanta (VPM), and former Prime Minister Jacques Sylla (President of the Congress). He spoke for twenty minutes and repeated himself often before asking for comments.

14. (C) After noting that I appreciated the difficulty of his situation, I made clear that the new government was, in our view, a step backwards and away from the Maputo accords and process, was formed in respect to neither the Transition Charter nor the previous constitution which it replaced, was neither inclusive nor consensual, and that the retention of the previous prime minister now threatened to plunge the country back into chaos and potential violence. I said that there is no basis for arguing to retain AGOA eligibility if this approach continues, and opined that international sanctions were also likely to follow absent a significant change. I appealed to him to get back to the negotiation table and to find a truly consensual prime minister, noting the willingness of many fine Malagasy to join a government if it were truly consensual and consistent with Maputo. With respect to his appeal for elections support, I said the USG was prepared to provide help, but only with a consensual government in place first.

15. (C) Chataigner spoke next, repeating and reinforcing the same points. He noted a "positive nuance" in the French position, calling the inclusion of people like Rajemison and Sylla "a small and welcome step in the direction of inclusion" but making clear that it was grossly insufficient to justify any change in the French position or support for elections. He noted that he had just gone to see Monja and

appealed to him to resign, which remains the French position, he said. The EU Charge d'Affaires said that the EU regrets being unable to continue its cooperation with Madagascar but sees no way to justify resuming it; indeed, she said, the ongoing "Article 96 negotiations are headed toward a negative conclusion" (read sanctions), as things now stand. The German, just back from vacation that morning, said only that the AU and SADC seem determined to make an example of Madagascar and that he expected his and other countries to follow their example closely. As we departed, I invited the ambassadors to join in an informal ICG discussion at the CMR on Saturday afternoon.

16. (C) Ninety minutes after the meeting with TGV, I spoke at some length with newly-promoted Vice Prime Minister in charge of Foreign Affairs Ny Hasina Andriamanjato. He evidently had gone to see TGV just after we left, and came straight from that meeting. I asked him if TGV had understood us ambassadors. Yes, he answered emphatically, loud and clear. He said that TGV had just decided to respond positively to Zafy's invitation for the four movements to meet and resume negotiations, to start on Sunday morning. Ny Hasina also said that TGV had told him of his decision to replace Monja with a consensual prime minister, identity to be determined later, without specifying when this might occur. I encouraged them to move quickly as the situation is again fragile with street demonstrations once again resuming. I offered that I doubted TGV would survive politically if he did not appoint a consensus prime minister and thus unblock the situation. Ny Hasina said he agreed. He also gave me a copy of an ordinance TGV has just signed which committed the government to implementing the Maputo Charter. He emphasized the gravity he perceived in this decision, which he said committed TGV to finding a new prime minister.

17. (C) Comment: TGV remains an exceedingly erratic, unsteady decision-maker (and implementer), as witnessed by the continuing zigzagging over filling the prime ministerial slot. And while Ny Hasina is one of his closest, most competent (among few who are), and longest-serving collaborators, TGV has repeatedly disappointed him by taking decisions contrary to his advice. We have to hope that this time will be different and that a new Prime Minister will soon be named, as the consequences of maintaining the status quo will be serious, but no one here can be sure of either

the resumption of dialogue or the naming of a consensus prime minister until they actually occur. If TGV continues to dither, one question is how long the military will be patient before forcing his hand one way or the other. End comment.

MARQUARDT